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(54) Title: SEARCHING APPARATUS AND METHODS
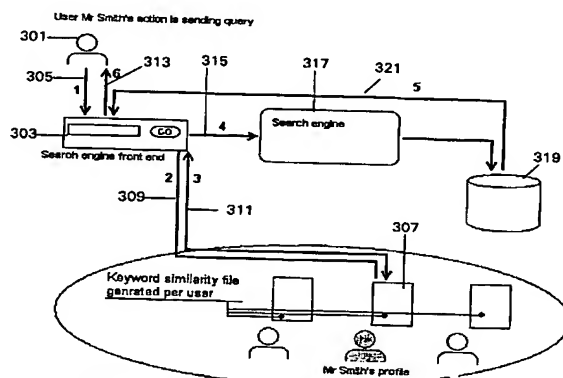
1: User sends query
2: User "related keyword" profile is read and additional Boolean keywords are extracted
3: The user is given the Boolean terms to expand his query
4: The expanded query can go to a search engine (one that can handle Boolean querying)
5: The set of result is extracted from the data repository
6: The Graphical User Interface displays the results back to the user

(57) Abstract: An apparatus and method are provided for improving database searching, the method comprising the steps of: receiving a search query comprising one or more search keywords from a user; accessing a user profile means arranged to provide data indicative of relatedness criteria between keywords from a set of documents, and identifying from said user profile means, for the or each search keyword, potentially-related keywords according to predetermined criteria; providing said potentially-related keywords to the user; receiving information from the user confirming that any potentially-related keywords are considered to be related keywords; in the event that any potentially-related keywords are confirmed by the user to be related keywords, incorporating such potentially-related keywords as keywords in an improved search query; and submitting the improved search query to a search engine. Also provided are an apparatus and method for creating and maintaining user profiles for use in the above searching apparatus and method.

TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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